

Serial No.: 10/674,721

Remarks

Claims 1-23 are pending in the application. Claims 13-17 are withdrawn from consideration pursuant to a restriction requirement.

In the present action, Claims 1-12 and 18-23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claims 1-3, 7-9 and 18-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by United States Patent 5,519,807 issued to Cellario et al.

Applicant has amended the claims pursuant to the Examiner's suggestion regarding allowable subject matter as set forth below. While new claims 24-26 were added, these were done so for readability purposes in that they are only rewritten versions of previous, but now canceled independent and dependent claims. Accordingly, claims 5-6, 11-12 and 22-26 remain pending in the application for further consideration by the Examiner.

Restriction Requirement

Claims 1-23 were subject to a restriction requirement with claims 1-12 and 18-23 included in Group I and claims 13-17 included in Group II. Applicant understands that claims 13-17 were withdrawn from consideration by the Examiner because Applicant received an action on the merits for the originally presented invention (claims 1-12 in Group I) and therefore Group I (claims 1-12 and 18-23) were constructively elected for further prosecution on the merits.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant appreciates the Examiner's indication that claims 4, 10 and 21 would be allowable (and also claims 5-6, 11-12 and 22-23 by virtue of their dependency from claims 4, 10 and 21 respectively) if claims 4, 10 and 21 were rewritten to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph and to include all of the limitations of the respective base and intervening claims.

Applicants have amended the claims pursuant to this indication of allowable subject matter and to address the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph.

However, for ease of readability, Applicants have chosen instead to add new base claims 24-26. In particular, base claim 24 corresponds to the subject matter from previous claims 1-4, new base claim 25 corresponds to the subject matter from previous claims 7-10, and new base claim 26 corresponds to the subject matter from previous claims previous claims 18-21.

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Claims 5-6, 11-12 and 22-23 have simply been amended to change their dependencies from the newly rewritten independent claims 24-26, respectively.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 112

Claims 1-12 and 18-23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In view of the foregoing amendments, this rejection is now deemed to be moot and Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn accordingly.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 102(b)

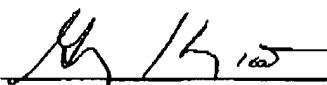
Claims 1-3, 7-9 and 18-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by United States Patent 5,519,807 issued to Cellario et al. This ground of rejection is now deemed to be moot in view of the amendments set forth herein. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn.

Conclusion

It is respectfully submitted that this application is now in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance are, therefore, respectfully solicited. If, however, the Examiner still believes that there are unresolved issues, he is invited to call Applicant's attorney so that arrangements may be made to discuss and resolve any such issues.

If any additional fees are due with respect to this amendment, please charge them to Deposit Account No. 12-2325.

Respectfully submitted,



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